



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

National Capital Parks - East
Mary McLeod Bethune Council House
National Historic Site
1318 Vermont Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005

Dear Student:

Enclosed, please find the following information on the life of Mary McLeod Bethune:

- A color photograph of Mary McLeod Bethune at the U.S. Capitol, circa 1940;
- A biographical sketch on the life of Mary McLeod Bethune, with a bibliography that can be used to research her life in greater detail;
- A chronology of the life of Mary McLeod Bethune;
- A brief history of the National Council of Negro Women (NCNW) the organization founded by Mary McLeod Bethune in 1935;
- A copy of the 86th Congressional Record where Congress approved the erection of a statue to honor Mary McLeod Bethune in Washington, DC;
- A brief history about the Bethune memorial statue and its designer entitled: **A Monument to a Monument** with an attached photograph of the memorial statue;
- And finally, you will find a copy of Mary McLeod Bethune's **Last Will and Testament**.

The above information provided is enough to assist you in preparing a written or oral presentation on the life of Mary McLeod Bethune. If additional information is needed for a more comprehensive report, remember consult the bibliography.

We invite you to visit the Mary McLeod Bethune Council House National Historic Site. The site is open seven day a week, between the hours of 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., yet our last guided tour is at 4:00 p.m. The site is closed for the following Federal holidays, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day and New Year's Day. Come and let our park rangers have the pleasure of giving you and your family a guided tour.

Sincerely,

Margaret Miles
Park Ranger





MARY MCLEOD BETHUNE 1875-1955

Mary McLeod Bethune became the most celebrated African American figure of the New Deal era and extended her influence as an educator, civil rights activist, and advocate for women's equality into the 1950's. Born in Mayesville, South Carolina, she was a child of former slaves. Through the influence of her parents, Samuel and Patsy McLeod, as well as her own self-determination, Bethune raised herself from the position of a cotton farming family to become an internationally known figure. At a time when African Americans rarely attained advanced education due to discriminatory practices, she graduated from the Presbyterian Mission School and attended Scotia Seminary in North Carolina, graduating in 1893. Though she subsequently entered the Moody Bible Institute with plans to become a missionary, she was refused a commission to serve in Africa as a result of racial discrimination. Frustrated in this effort, she pursued a career as an educator, teaching, at the Haines Institute and the Kendall Institute in the mid-1890's. After marrying Albertus Bethune in 1898, she continued her zealous work as an educator, eventually moving to Daytona Beach, Florida, where she founded the Daytona Normal and Industrial School for Negro Girls. Due to her exemplary efforts and the largesse of white entrepreneurs vacationing in Florida, Bethune's school grew rapidly, eventually merging with the Cookman Institute to become the Bethune-Cookman College. During this time Bethune developed a national presence resulting from her work on the Child Welfare Commission as well as for her participation in the activities of African American women's organizations. Concurrently, she worked as president of the Florida Federation of Colored Women and in 1920 founded the Southeastern Federation of Colored Women. By 1924 Bethune had been elected president of the National Association of Colored Women, a position she held until 1928. It was during the 1930's that Bethune began to achieve her greatest impact as a tireless advocate for the rights of women and African Americans. In 1935 she obtained positions which allowed her to advance her interests in both causes. In this year she was appointed to the National Advisory Committee of the National Youth Administration. Also in 1935 she organized, and became president of, the National Council of Negro Women (NCNW) an umbrella organization for African American women's clubs. Through her strategic position as director of the Division of Negro Affairs for the National Youth Administration Bethune was instrumental in promoting New Deal policies regarding African American employment.

within the federal government and the allocation of funds for programs affecting African. During the 1960's, the NCNW accelerated its civil rights activities beginning with the Wednesdays in Mississippi Project. Programs and activities greatly expanded in this period, as is reflected in some of the project titles: Community Services institutes, Migratory Workers Project, Project Homes, Project Womanpower, and Volunteers Unlimited. Typical of the NCNW's continued cooperation with other women's organizations was its involvement in the Women in Community Service (WICS) Program. In 1958, the NCNW began an effort to build a memorial to its founder, Bethune. Fund raising activities occupied most of the 1960's, and the memorial in Lincoln Park, Washington, D.C., a statue of Bethune and two children, was unveiled in 1974. The NCNW continued to expand its programs in the 1970's with initiatives relating to day care, employment, housing, hunger, immunization, and juvenile delinquency. As part of the NCNW's bicentennial activities, the NCNW spearheaded the Bethune Collection on Black Women's Organizations which attempted to document the history of Mary McLeod Bethune, the NCNW, and other African American women's organizations. The NCNW established its Center for Career Advancement, its Leadership, Development, and Training Program and its International Division in the 1970's. The Leadership, Development, and Training program organized the Black Women's Unity Drive, a membership campaign, and led training workshops. Through its International Division, the NCNW began working with African women to improve their lives through self-help programs and advocacy. The NCNW continued its diverse programs in the 1980's. With added emphasis on the family and the elderly. One of the NCNW's most enduring projects, the Black Family Reunion, was launched in 1986.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Carruth, Ella Kaiser. She Wanted to Read: The Story of Mary McLeod Bethune. New York: Abingdon Press, 1966.
- Halasa, Mawlu. Mary McLeod Bethune - Educator. New York: Chelsea House, 1989.
- Holt, Rackham. Mary McLeod Bethune. Garden City, NJ: Doubleday and Co., 1964.
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- McCluskey, Audrey and Elaine Smith. Mary McLeod Bethune Building: A Better World Bloomington & Indianapolis. Indiana: Indiana University Press 1999
- Peare, Catherine Owens. Mary McLeod Bethune. New York: Vanguard Press, 1951
- Smith, Elaine M. "Mary McLeod Bethune" in Black Women in America: An Historical Encyclopedia.
- Sterne, Emma Gelders. Mary McLeod Bethune. New York: Knopf Press, 1957.
- Wolfe, Rinna. Mary McLeod Bethune. New York: F. Wafts, 1992.



Experience Your America

MARY McLEOD BETHUNE

1875-1955

- BIRTH:** July 10, 1875, Mayesville, South Carolina
- PARENTS:** Samuel McLeod
Patsy (McIntosh) McLeod
Parents were slaves. Mrs. Bethune was fifteenth of seventeen children. After emancipation the parents obtained a tract of farm land and established a home. The younger children were born in this home. Some of the older brothers and sisters were slaves but after emancipation they returned to the home.
- EDUCATION:** Presbyterian Mission School, Mayesville, South Carolina
Scotia Seminary, Concord, North Carolina—graduated 1893
Moody Bible Institute, Chicago, Illinois, 1893-1895
- MARITAL STATUS:** Married Albertus Bethune in 1897. One son, Albert McLeod Bethune; one grand-son, Albert McLeod Bethune, Jr.; eleven great-grand children.
- EXPERIENCE:** Teacher—Haines Institute, Augusta, Georgia, 1895-1896
Teacher—Palatka Mission School, Palatka, Florida, 1899-1903
Founded Daytona Normal and Industrial School for Negro Girls (Now Bethune-Cookman College, Daytona Beach, Florida), 1904
*President, Bethune-Cookman College, 1904-1942
Director, Office of Negro Affairs, National Youth Administration, 1936-1944
Special Adviser to President Roosevelt on Minority Affairs, 1936-1944
Special Assistant to Secretary of War for Selection of Candidates for first Officers' Candidate School for Wacs, 1942
- HONORARY DEGREES:** A.M. Wilberforce University, 1915
M.S. South Carolina State College, Orangeburg, South Carolina, 1930
LL.D. Lincoln University, Pennsylvania, 1935
M.D. Tuskegee Institute, 1938
LL.D. Howard University, 1945
Doctor of Humanities, Bennett College, Greensboro, N. C., 1945
Doctor of Humanities, West Virginia State College, 1947
Doctor of Humanities, Rollins College, Winter Park, Florida, 1949
- AFFILIATIONS:** President, Association for the Study of Negro Life and History
Honorary President, International Longfellow Society
Honorary Vice President, National Council of Women of the United States
Director, Afro-American Life Insurance Company
Vice President, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
Vice President, National Urban League
Vice President, Commission on Interracial Cooperation
Vice President, Southern Conference for Human Welfare
Vice President, Central Life Insurance Company
Past President, National Association of Colored Women's Clubs
Past President, Florida State Teachers Association
Past President, American Teachers Association
Past President, Florida State Federation of Colored Women's Clubs
Founder, Delinquent Home for Colored Girls in Florida

- * Founder, National Council of Negro Women, Inc.
- * Founder, Bethune Beach, Inc.
- * Founder, Mary McLeod Bethune Foundation, Inc.
- Consultant, San Francisco Conference for the organization of the United Nations

Membership:

Hadassah—Honorary
 General Conference of the Methodist Church
 Women's Army for National Defense
 National Commission on Christian Education
 American Women's Voluntary Services—Board of Directors
 Southern Conference Educational Fund—Board of Directors
 American Mothers Committee—Board of Directors
 Council of Church Women—Executive Board
 Social Service Commission of the Methodist Church
 Florida Commission on Interracial Relations
 Americans for Democratic Action
 National Civil Liberties Union
 First Daytona Beach Housing Authority
 National Council on African Education, Inc.—Advisory Board
 National Committee on Atomic Information—Executive Board
 Good Neighbor Association, Daytona Beach, Florida
 National Commission for Child Welfare under Presidents Coolidge and Hoover

SORORITIES:

Iota Phi Lambda
 Delta Sigma Theta
 Lambda Kappa Mu
 National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa
 Cuban Society of Letters

LITERARY
 CONTRIBUTIONS:

"WHAT THE NEGRO WANTS"—edited by Rayford Logan—one chapter
 "SPIRITUAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY", Dr. Finkelstein's Volume—one chapter
 Weekly column in the CHICAGO DEFENDER
 Many articles to magazines, periodicals, etc., including editorials for WOMEN
 UNITED, official organ of the National Council of Negro Women

TRAVEL:

Throughout the United States
 Europe in 1925-26
 Haiti in 1952
 Liberia, West Africa, as United States representative to the inauguration of President
 Tubman, 1953
 Caux, Switzerland, 1954, guest of the World Assembly for Moral Re-Armament

AWARDS

(Too numerous to be listed). Among them—
 The Spingarn Medal, 1935
 The Frances Drexel Award, 1937
 First Annual Youth City Award, 1941
 The Thomas Jefferson Award, 1942
 Haitian Medal of Honor, 1952
 Star of Africa, 1953
 Dorie Miller Award, 1954

HOBBIES:

Gallery of photographs of outstanding men and women
 Collecting walking canes of famous men
 Collecting miniature elephants

* At the time of her death, May 20, 1955, Mrs. Bethune was founder, President Emeritus of Bethune-Cookman College and the National Council of Negro Women; also Founder, President of Bethune Beach, Inc. and the Mary McLeod Bethune Foundation.

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THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF NEGRO WOMEN

The National Council of Negro Women is a nonprofit educational and social service organization which works to advance opportunities and improve the quality of life for African American women. The NCNW serves as a coordinating body of 34 other national women's organizations and there are 250 community based sections throughout the United States. The programs and projects of the NCNW address many issues: consumer rights, day care, education, employment, health, historical development, housing, international relations, poverty, and racism.

The NCNW was founded on December 5, 1935 by Mary McLeod Bethune and 20 other African American women representing 14 African American women's organizations. The group was organized to unite African American women in social planning and action on national and international levels. The NCNW was incorporated in 1936.

In the first few years, the NCNW was particularly concerned about employment. It held a conference on the participation of African American women in federal welfare programs, testified in Congress and acquired information on the status of African American workers in various industries. The NCNW also established an Archives Committee which initially cooperated with Mary Beard and the World Center for Women's Archives. Later, the Archives Committee worked to acquire documentation on African American women for the NCNW's National Archives of Negro Women.

During the 1940's, the NCNW focused on problems of African American women workers through a "Hold Your Job" campaign and worked for passage of a permanent Fair Employment Practice Committee. Among other projects, the NCNW worked for the admission of African American women into the WACS and WAVES, launched a liberty ship named for Harriet Tubman, participated in numerous conferences and co-operated with other African American and women's organizations in various activities. In 1940, the NCNW began the publication of the African American Woman's Journal, later named Women United, which carried articles not only about the council, but about the many interests of African American women. A newsletter, Telefact, began publication in 1943.

The NCNW was the only African American women's organization involved in the creation of the United Nations and maintained an observer there. Other international activities included a study seminar in Cuba in 1940 and attendance at meetings abroad. The NCNW also held a number of receptions for representatives of foreign countries.

In the 1950's the NCNW continued to promote the issues of education, employment, health, and international relations. With the 1954 Supreme Court decision on segregation, the Council became more involved in civil rights activities. It held confer-

ences on the implementation of the decision and sponsored a voter registration drive. The NCNW's association and cooperation with other organizations on various topics also grew during this period.

During the 1960's, the NCNW accelerated its civil rights activities beginning with the Wednesdays in Mississippi in Project. Programs and activities greatly expanded in this period, as is reflected in some of the project titles: Community Services institutes, Migratory Workers Project, Project Homes, Project Womanpower, and Volunteers Unlimited. Typical of the NCNW's continued cooperation with other women's organizations was its involvement in the Women in Community Service (WICS) Program.

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Gardner, Bettye J. "The NCNW, The Formative Years," presented at "African American Women: An Historical Perspective," Washington, D.C., November 13, 1979 "History of the NCNW", Records of the NCNW, Series 5

National Council of Negro Women 1953-1957, Records of the NCNW, Series 13

Women United Souvenir Year Book (1951), Records of the NCNW, Series



EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA



Congressional Record

United States
of America

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 86th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Mary McLeod Bethune

EXTENSION OF REMARKS

OF

HON. FRANCES P. BOLTON

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, August 17, 1959

Mrs. BOLTON. Mr. Speaker, nearly 100 years have passed since President Abraham Lincoln signed the great Emancipation Proclamation into law. In commemoration of this "century of freedom," the National Council of Negro Women has voted unanimously to undertake in 1963 the project of memorializing their founder, the late Mary McLeod Bethune.

I have today introduced a House joint resolution authorizing the Secretary of the Interior to grant authority to the National Council of Negro Women to erect in the District of Columbia a memorial honoring Mary McLeod Bethune, the design and location of the memorial to be approved by the Secretary, the Commission of Fine Arts, and the National Capital Planning Commission.

Among the Negro people who have truly shared the American dream of freedom none stands higher than the late Mary McLeod Bethune. Rightly called the "first woman of her race," her life work stands as a testimonial to selfless dedication in behalf of her people.

Born of slave parents in South Carolina on July 10, 1875, Mary McLeod Bethune was educated in South Carolina, North Carolina, and Illinois. Consumed with a desire to help others, she set about finding a place to teach with only \$1.50 in her pocket. Through prayer, determination and unbounded faith, she was enabled to open a small school with only five girls as students. Today this little school has grown into the thriving institution of Bethune-Cookman College, in Daytona Beach, Fla.

During her 38 years as a college president, Mary McLeod Bethune participated in numerous constructive efforts of her time. Responding to the call of Government she occupied many important posts including service under Presidents Coolidge and Hoover as a member of the National Commission for Child Welfare. During the administration of Franklin D. Roosevelt, she was Director of the Office of Negro Affairs, National Youth Administration, Special Advisor to the President on Minority Affairs, and Special Assistant to the Secretary of War for selecting candidates to the first WAC Officers Candidate School. During her useful and active life she was the recipient of eight honorary degrees from leading American colleges and universities.

Mary McLeod Bethune was affiliated with numerous literary and religious societies and served as an active officer for dozens of professional and civic associa-

tions. Next to building Bethune-Cookman College into a million-dollar coeducational institution, her greatest interest was founding the National Council of Negro Women. She considered the vast potential of organizing into one unit the woman power of 800,000 Negro women, already organized into more than 20 national groups. Her dream was accomplished in 1935 and she became the council's first president, a position she held for 14 years, at which time she became president emeritus. Untimely though her passing on May 18, 1955, her memory is enriched by her works and her rare spirit.

It is the hope of the council that the statue of Mrs. Bethune can be erected in Lincoln Park on East Capitol Street where the dramatic figure of President Lincoln and the Negro slave, known as the emancipation group, was erected by the Western Sanitary Commission of St. Louis. Dedicated on April 14, 1876, the 11th anniversary of the assassination of President Lincoln, this memorial was built with funds contributed solely by emancipated citizens.

Mr. Speaker, this is a moment of great significance in the history of mankind's progress toward social justice. Adoption of this resolution will demonstrate that America is keeping faith with its destiny, and will provide renewed inspiration to free peoples throughout the world.

A MONUMENT TO A MONUMENT

The Memorial to Mary McLeod Bethune has been designed by Robert Berks, the Boston born sculptor now living at Orient Point, New York. Noted for his unique style, Mr. Berks has created over 300 portraits of public and private figures. Among his best known works are Abraham Lincoln in the Ford's Theatre, Washington, D.C., and those done posthumously of John F. Kennedy, Robert F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King. The portrait bust of President Kennedy is in the Performing Arts Center bearing his name.

The Bethune Memorial, situated at the East end of Lincoln Park, Washington, D.C., faces the United States Capitol. It is the only monument to a woman, and the first to a black American, in a public park in the nation's capital. It is on an axis which includes monuments to Presidents Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln and Kennedy. This artery stretches from Lincoln Park to the Potomac River. The Bethune Memorial represents the contributions of black Americans to community and national life. It symbolizes the pride and heritage of a people whose struggle for emancipation is documented in the statue of Abraham Lincoln with an unshackled slave at his feet. The Emancipation Group, located at the West end of Lincoln Park, has been turned so that it faces the Bethune Memorial.

The Memorial grouping of three figures depicts Mary McLeod Bethune with two young children. The profoundness of her philosophy of life has been dramatically captured by the artist who has shown Mrs. Bethune as looking into the distant future as she passes on her legacy to the male child as the little girl shares this moment in time with them.

The Bethune Memorial is of heroic proportions. The figure of Mrs. Bethune is twelve feet high and weighs approximately 2000 pounds. The children are about nine feet tall and weigh roughly 1000 pounds each. The almost lifelike figures are roughly textured. This technique gives the viewer a sense of movement, rhythm, and inner vitality. Mounted on a pedestal 20 feet wide, fourteen feet deep, six feet above ground level, and made of white concrete with an exposed aggregate of pinkish limestone, the monument gives a small neighborhood park on Capitol Hill—a new dimension.

Architectural work for the monument was done by J. Max Bond, Jr. of New York. Art consultant for the memorial, Sol Nodel, F.R.S.A., artist illuminator, designed the wording for the base of the memorial.



Mary McLeod Bethune Memorial

I LEAVE YOU A DESIRE TO LIVE HARMONIOUSLY WITH YOUR FELLOW MEN.

The problem of color is world-wide. It is found in Africa and Asia, Europe and South America. I appeal to American Negroes - both North-and, South, East and West-to recognize their common problems and unite to solve them. I pray that we will begin to live harmoniously with the white race. So often, our difficulties have made us super-sensitive and truculent. I want to see my people conduct themselves naturally in all relationships, fully conscious of their manly responsibilities and deeply aware of their heritage. I want them to learn to understand whites and influence them for good, for it is advisable for us to do so. We are a minority of fifteen millions living side by side with a white majority. We must learn to deal with people positively and on an individual basis.

I LEAVE YOU, FINALLY, A RESPONSIBILITY TO OUR YOUNG PEOPLE.

The world around us really belongs to youth, for youth will take over its future management. Our children must never, lose their zeal for building a better world. They must not be discouraged from aspiring toward greatness, for they are to be the leaders of tomorrow. Nor must they forget that the masses of our people are still underprivileged, ill-housed, impoverished and victimized by discrimination. We have a powerful potential in our youth, and we must have the courage to change old ideas and practices so that we may direct their power toward good ends. Faith, courage, brotherhood, dignity, ambition, responsibility - these are needed today as never before. We must cultivate them and use them as tools for our task of completing the establishment of equality for the Negro. We must sharpen these tools in the struggle that faces us and find new ways of using them. The Freedom Gates are half a-jar. We must pry them fully open. If I have a legacy to leave my people, it is my philosophy of living and serving. As I face tomorrow, I am content, for I think I have spent my life well. I pray now that my philosophy may be helpful to those who share my vision of a world of Peace.

EDITOR'S NOTE:

There is a certain amount of inspiration that must come to stimulate us on to new and higher heights. There are no words that can be more strengthening than the words of one of the greatest personalities in the twentieth century, who in her last literary pronouncement left a legacy that will become one of the greatest historical documents of our time.

Published by the Johnson Publications in "Ebony Magazine"
August, 1955



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By visiting
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1318 Vermont Avenue, NW
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National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



Mary McLeod Bethune Council House HHS
National Capital Parks-East

My Last Will And Testament

By DR. MARY McLEOD BETHUNE

Sometimes as I sit communing in my study I feel that death is not far off. I am aware that it will overtake me before the greatest of my dreams - full equality for the Negro in our time - is realized. Yet, I face the reality without fear or regrets. I am resigned to death, as all humans must be at the proper time. Death neither alarms nor frightens one who has had a long career of fruitful toil. The knowledge that my work has been helpful to many fills me with joy and great satisfaction.

Since my retirement from an active role in educational work and from the affairs of the National Council of Negro Women, I have been living quietly and working at my desk at my home here in Florida. The years have directed a change of pace for me. I am now 76 years old and my activities are no longer so strenuous as they once were. I feel that I must conserve my strength to finish the work at hand.

Already I have begun working on my autobiography which will record my life journey in detail, together with the innumerable -side trips which have carried me abroad, into every corner of our country, into homes, both lowly and luxurious, and even into the White House to confer with the Presidents. I have also deeded my home and its contents to the Mary McLeod Bethune Foundation, organized in 1953, for research, interracial activity and sponsorship of wider educational opportunities.

Sometimes I ask myself if I have any other legacy to leave. Truly, my worldly possessions are few. Yet, my experiences have been rich. From them I have distilled principles and policies in which I believe firmly, for they represent the meaning of my life's work. They are the products of much sweat and sorrow. Perhaps, in them there is something of value. So, as my life draws to a close, I will pass them on to Negroes everywhere in the hope that an old woman's philosophy may give them inspiration. Here, then, is my legacy.

I LEAVE YOU LOVE. Love builds. It is positive and helpful. It is more beneficial than hate. Injuries quickly forgotten quickly pass away. Personally and racially, our enemies must be forgiven. Our aim must be to create, a world of fellowship and justice where no man's skin, color or religion, is held against him. "Love thy neighbor" is a precept which could transform the world if it were universally practiced. It connotes brotherhood and to me, brotherhood of man is the noblest concept in human relations. Loving your neighbor means being interracial, interreligious, and international.

In America must be ever vigilant lest his forces be marshalled behind wrong causes and undemocratic movements. He must not lend his support to any group that seeks to subvert democracy. That is why we must select leaders who are wise and courageous, and of great moral stature and ability. We have great leaders among us today: Ralph Bunche, Channing Tobias, Mordecai Johnson and Walter White. (The latter now deceased). We have had other great men and women in the past: Frederick Douglass, Booker T. Washington, Harriett Tubman, Sojourner Truth, and Mary Church Terrell. We must produce more qualified people like them, who will work not for themselves, but for others.

I LEAVE YOU FAITH. Faith is the first factor in a life devoted to service. Without faith nothing is possible. With it, nothing is impossible. Faith in God is the greatest power, but great too, is faith in oneself. In 50 years the faith of the American Negro in himself has grown immensely, and is still increasing. The measure of our progress as a race is in precise relation to the depth of the faith in our people held by our leaders. Frederick Douglass, genius though he was, was spurred by a deep conviction that his people would heed his counsel and follow him to freedom. Our greatest Negro figures have been imbued with faith. Their perseverance paid rich dividends. We must never forget their sufferings and their sacrifices, for they were the foundations of the progress of our people.

I LEAVE YOU RACIAL DIGNITY. I want Negroes to maintain their human dignity at all costs. We, as Negroes, must recognize that we are the custodians as well as the heirs of a great civilization. We have given something to the world as a race and for this we are proud and fully conscious of our place in the total picture of mankind's development. We must learn also to share and mix with all men. We must make an effort to be less race conscious and more conscious of individual and human values. I have never been sensitive about my complexion. My color has never destroyed my self respect nor as it ever caused me to conduct myself in such a manner as to merit the disrespect of any person. I have not let my color handicap me. Despite many crushing burdens and handicaps, I have risen from the cotton fields of South Carolina to found a college, administer it during the years of growth, become a public servant in the government and country, and a leader of women. I would not exchange my color for all the wealth in the world, for had I been born white, I might not have been able to do all I have done or yet hope to do.

I LEAVE YOU HOPE. The Negro's growth will be great in the years to come. Yesterday, our ancestors endured the degradation of slavery, yet they retained their dignity. Today, we direct our economic and political strength toward winning a more abundant and secure life. Tomorrow, a new Negro, unhindered by race taboos and shackles, will benefit from more than 330 years of ceaseless striving and struggle. Theirs will be a better world. This I believe with all my heart.

I LEAVE YOU THE CHALLENGE OF DEVELOPING CONFIDENCE IN ONE ANOTHER. As long as Negroes are hemmed into racial blocs of prejudice and pressure, it will, be necessary for them to band together for economic betterment. Negro banks, insurance companies and other businesses are examples of successful racial economic enterprises. These institutions were made possible by vision and mutual aid. Confidence was vital in getting them started and keeping them going. Negroes have got to demonstrate still more confidence in each other in business. This kind of confidence will aid the economic rise of the race by bringing together the pennies and dollars of our people and ploughing them into useful channels. Economic separatism cannot be tolerated in this enlightened age, and it is not practicable. We must spread out as far and as fast as we can, but we must also help each other as we go.

I LEAVE YOU A THIRST FOR EDUCATION. Knowledge is the prime need of the hour. More and more, Negroes are taking full advantage of hard-won opportunities for learning, and the educational level of the Negro population is at its highest point in history. We are making greater use of the privileges inherent in living in democracy. If we continue in this trend, we will be able to rear increasing numbers of strong purposeful men and women, equipped with vision, mental clarity, health and education.

I LEAVE YOU A RESPECT FOR THE USE OF POWER. We live in a world which respects power above all things. Power, intelligently directed, can lead to more freedom. Unwisely directed, it can be a dreadful destructive force. During my lifetime I have seen the power of the Negro grow enormously. It has always been my first concern that this power should be placed on the side of human justice. Now that the barriers are crumbling everywhere, the Negro in